

Iowa State Fire Marshal's Office
Fire Extinguishing System Contractors Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 29, 2005

Note: Because this Board does not become officially effective until July 1, 2005, they will be referred to as the Committee rather than the Board.

Committee Members Present:

Mark Adams, Acting Chairman, representing the Fire Service

Greg Higginbotham, representing Wet System Contractors

Shawn Mullen, representing Dry System Contractors

Kathy Carter, representing the Fire Service

Ron Hoover, representing Building Officials

Lorna Hamilton, representing the Public

Paul Tinder, representing the State Fire Marshal

Amy Infelt, representing licensed Architects and Engineers, attended part of the meeting by telephone.

Staff Attending:

W. Stuart Crine, Building Code Commissioner

Mike Coveyou, Agency Rules Administrator

The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:00 AM by Acting Chairman Mark Adams.

- **Motion** by Kathleen Carter, **Seconded** by Ron Hoover to accept the minutes of the June 13, 2005 meeting. **Motion** passed unanimously.
- Acting Chairman Adams then asked each member to speak about any information that they may have gathered since the last meeting:

Adams, developed and distributed a questionnaire to the Iowa Fire Marshal's Association soliciting their input on what they would like to see included in the Rules.

Hoover, will be meeting with the Iowa Building Officials Association later this month to solicit input.

Carter, due to office vacations, no new information.

Mullen, made contact with Jeff Altmyer, Iowa Alarm Contractors Association. Mr. Altmyer was very interested in reviewing whatever Rules are developed. Shawn also presented an issue that has come to his attention regarding the assertion that all life system designs should require a stamp from a Licensed Engineer. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the question of whether or not a licensed engineer should have to show competency in fire protection design in order to serve as an RME. Also, where to draw the line between design and layout of a system and who should perform each.

National Institute for Certification of Engineering Technology (NICET) was discussed. Mullen and Higginbotham, both NICET certified, gave the Committee a description of how NICET certification works. NICET Fire Protection Certification is broken down into Wet systems, Fire Alarms and Detection and Special Hazards (Dry systems). Are the certifications going to be required in the individual sub-categories?

Alternatives to NICET certification were discussed, including the possible need for a grace period to allow companies not already employing an RME with NICET certification to obtain such.

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Tinder, receiving many questions about how to comply with the law. He is advising them to submit their names and contact information to Stuart Crine in order to receive information as it becomes available.

Higginbotham, has received questions about how the certification law will effect a WIRSBO interconnected sprinkler system. Acting Chairman Adams pointed out that a WIRSBO system does meet the definition of Chapter 100C.1 (2) "Automatic fire extinguishing system".

Would a plumber acting as a sub-contactor to an RME be covered as an employee of the RME and then not be required to be certified?

Hamilton, still working on defining her constituent base and how best to solicit their input. The Iowa Society of Hospital Engineers, the Iowa Healthcare Association, the Iowa School Board Association, Building Owners and Mangers Association were suggested as public organizations that may have an interest in the Committee's work.

- The Committee discussed the potential of requiring not only NICET Certification but also proof of competence for fire protection design.
- It was suggested that a list of certified RME'S and their respective companies be added to the State Fire Marshal's Office web page.
- Mike Coveyou told the committee that one of the basic questions that must be answered is; what level of enforcement does the Committee want the State Fire Marshal's Office to put in place. This will drive other issues such as the fees that will be needed to cover the costs of the program.
- The Committee discussed ways to allow contractors to perform work in Iowa while they are meeting the work requirements required to achieve NICET III certification. One possible method is to establish a provisional license that would require the licensee to meet certain milestones.
- Insurance requirements for contractors were discussed. It was pointed out that insurance for companies installing fire protection systems is expensive and is only offered by a few companies. Plumbers installing fire protection systems will be particularly interested in the insurance requirements. It was suggested that a requirement for insurance companies to notify the Office at least thirty days in advance of any cancellations be included.
- It was discussed that Iowa Code 100C.5 requires that a new RME be filed with the State Fire Marshal within six months of the loss of a company's RME unless an alternate has been named on the application.
- Potential Application Issues:
 - Should a criminal history be done on all applicants? If so, would you draw the line on what types are crimes are acceptable?
 - If the applicant has been certified/licensed in other states, should they be asked about past disciplinary actions?
 - Will a social security number be required, and if so, how will it be protected?

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- Acting Chairman Adams made the following Research Assignments for Committee members:
 - Certification Requirements for RME's – Greg and Shawn.
 - Application – Kathleen
 - Insurance – Ron, Lorna and Amy
 - Suspension and revocation – Ron and Paul
 - Complaint Process – Mark and Amy
 - Civil Penalties, collection procedures – Kathleen, Mark and Ron
- Acting Chairman Adams asked the members to email Stuart Crine to nominate themselves or any member as Chairperson for the Board. The official Chairperson will be elected at the July 13, 2005 meeting.
- Upcoming Meeting Dates – July 13 and July 27 and August 10. All meeting times will be 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.
Respectfully submitted,

W. Stuart Crine,
Building Code Commissioner